

## Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 AID-05 TRSE-00 /076 W

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R 150900Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4838  
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
AMEMBASSY SANA  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 3951

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO SY

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ASAD IN JORDAN

REF: AMMAN 3908

1. SUMMARY: IN FORST VISIT OF SYRIAN HEAD OF STATE  
TO JORDAN IN 18 YEARS, SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASAD AND LARGE  
DELEGATION RECEIVED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RECEPTION IN  
JORDAN EQUALLING THAT OF PRESIDENT SADAT AND NIXON,  
AND KING FEISEL. MEDIA GAVE BLANKET COVERAGE.  
PROGRAM INCLUDED NOW STANDART TOUR OF MILITARY UNITS  
IN JORDAN VALLEY AND ONE RJAF AIR BASE, WITH STRESS  
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THROUGHOUT VISIT ON FUNDAMENTAL JORDANIAN-SYRIAN UNITY.

RUMORS OF SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ACCORDS RESULTING FROM CONSULTATIONS WERE NOT BORNE OUT BY INNOCUOUS JOINT COMMUNIQUE. PUBLIC OPINION VARIED: PAN-ARAB TYPES RESPONDED TO CALLS FOR TRADITIONAL BILAD ESH-SHAM (GREATER SYRIA) UNITY, WHILE TRADITIONAL EAST BANKERS VOICED FEARS THAT JORDAN FALLING TOO MUCH UNDER SYRIAN DOMINATION. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT HAFEZ AL-ASAD RECEIVED EXTREMELY WARM PUBLIC RECEPTION DURING HIS JUNE 10-12 VISIT TO AMMAN, THE FIRST TO JORDAN BY A SYRIAN LEADER SINCE 1957. (LARGE SYRIAN DELEGATION INCLUDED PM AL-AYYUBI, FORMIN KHADDAM, DEP CINC SYRIAN ARMED FORCES AND DEFMIN MAJ GEN TLASS, AND MININFO AHMAD.) GOJ CEREMONIAL PREPARATIONS (ARCHES, FLAGS) AND PUBLIC TURNOUT RIVALED THOSE FOR PRESIDENTS NIXON AND SADAT AND KING FEISAL. MEDIA GAVE SATURATION COVERAGE TO VISIT, EVEN TO POINT OF SYRIAN JOURNALISTS ACCOMPANYING DELEGATION BEING GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE BROADCASTING TIME WITH JORDANIANS ON AMMAN TV AND RADIO.

3. ASAD'S PROGRAM IN JORDAN SIMILAR TO THAT ARRANGED FOR SADAT DURING LATTER'S MAY VISIT: AUDIENCE WITH LEADER OF LOCAL SYRIAN COMMUNITY, TWO EVENING BANQUETS (INCLUDING AWARDING OF JORDAN'S HIGHEST DECORATION, MEDAL OF HUSSEIN IBN 'ALI), MILITARY BRIEFINGS AT JAF HDQS, AND TOUR OF "FRONT LINE AREAS" (JORDAN VALLEY MILITARY UNITS, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON SITE OF 1968 BATTLE OF KARAMEH AND ON NORTHERN VALLEY EMPLACEMENTS) AND KING HUSSEIN AFB AT MAFRAQ. ASAD ALSO SANDWICHED IN WELL-PUBLICIZED HOUR AND HALF MEETING WITH DELEGATION OF LOCAL PLO PERSONALITIES, INCLUDING REV ELIYYA KHOURY (PLO EXCOMM MEMBER) AND THE DIRECTOR OF AMMAN PLO OFFICE; DELEGATION EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR "ASAD'S INTENTION TO SET UP JOINT SYRIAN-PLO MILITARY AND POLITICAL COMMAND." HUSSEIN AND ASAD TOOK IN QUICK VISIT TO AQABA ON LAST DAY OF VISIT. TWO LEADERS MANAGED TO FIND TIME FOR SOME SIX HOURS OF PRIVATE TALKS, LENDING CREDENCE TO RUMORS--ULTIMATELY QUASHED--OF SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL AND MILITARY COORDINATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES.

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4. PUBLIC STATEMENTS DWELT ENDLESSLY ON HISTORICAL UNITY OF TWO COUNTRIES: "YOU HAVE MERELY JOURNEYED TO ANOTHER ROOM OF YOUR HOUSE...ONE PEOPLE, ONE ARMY...YOU HAVE MOVED TODAY FROM ONE PART OF BILAD ESH-SHAM TO ANOTHER, ETC." IN SPEECHES OF WELCOME, KING HUSSEIN TENDED TO SOFTPEDAL ARAB-ISRAEL CONFRONTATION, ALTHOUGH ASAD REFERRED FREQUENTLY TO 1973 VICTORY AND UNIQUE DUTY OF CONFRONTATION STATES TO LIBERATE USURPED LANDS.

IN ADDITION, ASAD PLAYED SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO JORDAN ARMY AND "ITS MARTYRS WHO WATERED THE LAND OF THE GOLAN WITH THEIR BLOOD." FINAL JOINT COMMUNIQUE, WHICH, INTER-ALIA, ESTABLISHED UMBRELLA "SYRIAN-JORDANIAN JOINT SUPREME COMMITTEE FOR POLITICAL, MILITARY, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, INFORMATION AND OTHER DOMAINS," IS DISCUSSED REFTEL.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH JORDANIAN PALATES SOMEWHAT JADED BY SUCCESSION OF HIGH-LEVEL VISITORS TO AMMAN, ASAD JOURNEY SPARKED WIDESPREAD SPECULATION. EFFUSIVE PRE-VISIT PUBLICITY, PRESENCE IN DELEGATION OF DEFMIN TLASS, AND PRESS HINTS OF "SIGNIFICANT" MILITARY ACCORDS LED PUBLIC TO EXPECT ANNOUNCEMENT OF MORE CONCRETE ARRANGEMENTS THAN VAGUELY-DEFINED "JOINT SUPREME COMMITTEE." REACTION TO VISIT, HOWEVER, VARIED. YOUNGER, MORE ANTI-ISRAEL, PAN-ARAB ACTIVISTS (STUDENTS, LOW-LEVEL BUREAUCRATS) WERE SINCERELY MOVED BY EXHORTATIONS TO BILAD ESH-SHAM UNITY AND VISW COMMISSION AS SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD BRINGING JORDAN BACK INTO ARAB FOLD. OLDER, NATIONALISTIC EAST BANKERS TEND TO AGREE WITH THIS ASSESSMENT, BUT TAKE GLOOMY VIEW THAT THIS WILL MERELY DRAG JORDAN UNDER SYRIAN DOMINATION. (LATTER GROUP REGARDS JOINT COMMUNIQUE WITH SUSPICION, FEARING THAT ANY AGREEMENT SO DEVOID OF REAL CONTENT IMPLIES PRESENCE OF SECRET CLAUSES BINDING JORDAN TO SYRIAN ORBIT.) THIRD GROUP--MAINLY INTELLECTUALS, UNIVERSITY TYPES--FEELS THAT KING HAS PULLED WOOL OVER SYRIAN EYES BY MAINTAINING JORDANIAN SOVEREIGNTY WHILE PRODUCING SMOKESCREEN OF FULSOME PHRASES. PICKERING

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